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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Requirements and Evaluation Staff

SUBJECT : Report on Photo Interpreter Resources Study Group

1. We have reviewed the report of the Photo Interpreter Resources Study Group and as best we can judge all of the basic data relating to NFAC is current. However, it is our opinion that the report is more a compilation of useful information than an effective document to rectify or clarify problems regarding the level and organization of resources devoted to photo interpretation. There are four particular issues of those addressed in the study which we believe to be the most important ones. They are:

- the role of NPIC in the intelligence community
- the Basic Reports Program
- the need for more third phase imagery analysis
- the frequent examinations of the imagery analysis community

2. These problem issues are discussed and optional solutions are proposed in the report, but with the exception of the fourth one, no concrete recommended actions are set forth. In this memorandum we will address the first three issues by commenting on the options presented in the study and/or by offering our own--admittedly biased--opinions about proper solutions. We will also comment on the study's recommendations regarding the fourth issue.

3. The Role of the National Photo Interpretation Center (NPIC). The mission and responsibilities of the NPIC is the key to the whole concept of a National Tasking Plan (NTP) for photo interpretation. The role defined for NPIC in the 1967 NTP consisted primarily of performing first and second phase analysis and reporting for the national security community from national imagery reconnaissance systems, performing the search function on imagery from these systems, and providing third phase analysis and reporting for the community on a specific list of subjects (see Section IV, page 15). The PIRSG study demonstrated, however, that there presently is a large amount of second phase reporting being done by departmental organizations and by the unified and specified commands of DoD with a resulting redundency in effort. There is also a certain-- but lesser--amount of first phase reporting being done by organizations other than NPIC, with prospects for this to increase when the DoD Defense

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Dissemination Program becomes operational. There are various reasons cited as to why this proliferation of first and second phase reporting by various organizations has occurred (different organizational requirements related to timeliness, completeness, periodicity of reporting, and classification). Concurrent with this proliferation of first and second phase reporting, the study documents that there is a perceived need on the part of all-source intelligence production organizations to get more detailed third phase reporting from imagery.

4.   The PIRSG study addresses this issue in several places. In Section IV, page 14, it states in essence that COMIREX/EXSUBCOM along with all organizations should review second phase reporting to reduce overlap and duplication. This is essentially a motherhood statement and we doubt if it will produce any concrete results.

5.   In Section IV, page 9, Proposal (option) 2 outlines a significant change from the present role of NPIC. It states that "a single national-level organization be assigned the primary responsibility for imagery exploitation against problems of interest to policy level officials and on which there is community-wide national interest". In effect, this proposal, as we read it, means that NPIC would have the same kind of management control over the exploitation of imagery that NSA now exercises over the exploitation of Sigint. We believe this proposal is a non-starter for three major reasons.

-- NFAC--and we expect other intelligence organizations-- presently has significant difficulties getting the types of Sigint analysis and reporting it requires from NSA because it does not have direct control over any of NSA's exploitation resources.

-- Intelligence production organizations would continue to want their own departmental imagery analysis units to respond to their specialized needs and in all likehood these units would be working on the same high priority problems as the national center. This would tend to cause more--not less--duplication.

-- The national center would probably require substantial augmentation in resources--a scarce commodity.

6.   We would propose instead that the NPIC, as it is constituted today, be given exclusive responsibility for first and second phase reporting for the community along with the search function. Remove the existing third phase basic reporting responsibilities from NPIC and let that organization concentrate fully on these other highly important

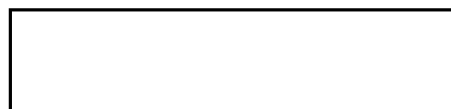SUBJECT: Report on Photo-Interpreter Resources Study Group

tasks (see discussion on basic reporting program for how this could be accomplished). And lastly, provide NPIC with relevant and clear guidance to allow them to greatly increase the utility of much needed activity summary reports based on first and second phase analyses. We realize that there is an important morale issue involved in removing detailed analysis from the NPIC. First and second phase reporting is not the type of analysis that people like to do on a continuing basis. We also realize that there is a valid and largely unmet need for good, useable activity summary reports, and that the NPIC analysts as they perform the first and second phase reporting and search operations accumulate a wealth of latent knowledge that would be of use to the intelligence community. These activity summaries should provide the type of challenge required to maintain the analyst's morale.

7. <u>The Basic Reports Program</u>. We believe the Basic Reports Program should be discontinued. During the course of the study it became apparent that the majority of the work done under the auspices of the Basic Reports Program by a particular imagery analysis component was for its parent organization. In effect, it was departmental rather than national reporting. It was also apparent to us that the present method of soliciting which reports a particular organization would like produced over the next 12 to 15 months by the imagery analysis community is not the best way to use scarce resources. We believe this method of developing the Basic Reports Program for the following year generates work on subjects or installations that are not of the highest priority. It is our experience that production offices often times have difficulty formulating their own research programs given the changing intelligence priorities. Instead, we suggest that each departmental imagery organization concentrate on providing its parent organization with the necessary third phase detailed reporting, and distribute these reports widely throughout the Community--or, at a minimum, register them in the National Exploitation Products Data File so they can be retrieved when needed. Abolishment of the Basic Reports Program would also free-up NPIC resources which could be transferred to first and second phase reporting, the search function, and summary reporting. In sum, it is our judgment that the basic program is so cumbersome that it is ineffective, unnecessary, and costly.

8. <u>Increasing the amount of third phase detailed analysis</u>. There are two methods for increasing the amount of detailed imagery analysis being produced: either provide the imagery analysis organizations additional resources, or make adjustments in the workload within the present resources billets. We believe there is a need for additional billets in OIA and in other organizations. But we also believe there can be an increase in third phase reporting with the resources presently at hand. If the Basic Reports Program were abolished and NPIC's capabilities in first and second phase reporting, search, and activity summary reporting were augmented, the departmental organizations would be able to transfer more resources to detailed analysis.

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9. <u>Reexamination of the imagery analysis community.</u> And lastly, we agree with the recommendation in Section IV, page 27, that "There should be no further studies addressing overlap and duplication in imagery exploitation without considering the overlaping functional responsibilities and resultant duplicative tasking by the intelligence production community." It is imperative that senior government officials realize that the imagery analysis community is not an isolated entity that exists independent of other organizations in the intelligence community. To examine the resources devoted to imagery analysis in isolation from the intelligence production process that it contributes to is not an effective way to determine resource requirements. To make the most effective use of these resources, their work must be an integral part of the research program of the organizations they are supporting. As you are well aware, efforts to do this in OIA are underway through the review of research programs from the various Agency offices and through contacts between OIA and these offices at all levels.

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